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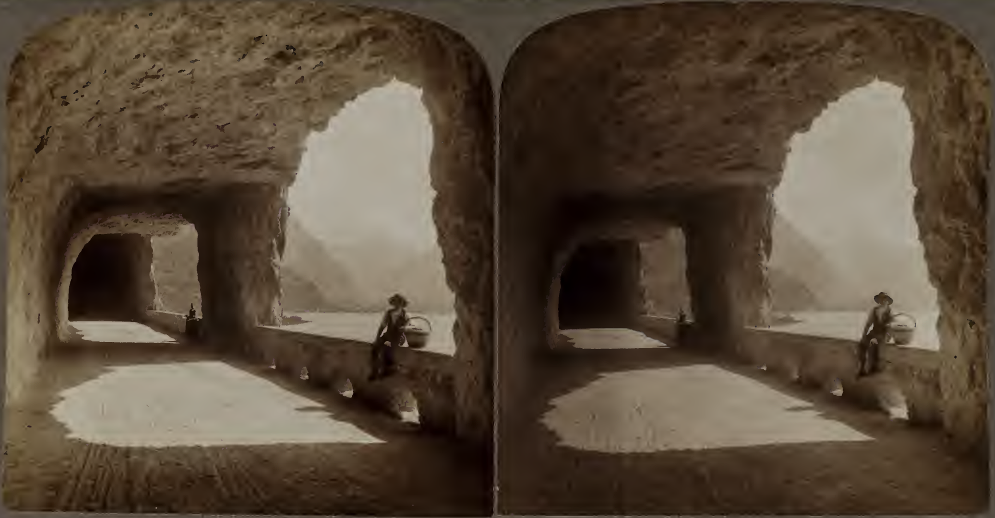
New York, London, Toronto-Canada, Ottawa-Kansas.



(15) Tunnels of the Axenstrasse, overhanging Lake Lucerne, Switzerland

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(736) The highway, where we stand, is cut out over Lake Lucerne, is one of the most celebrated modern roads in Europe. For several miles here along the lake-side the mountains rise sheer and steep like these we see about, and the only way to make a road was by blasting out the solid rock. A part of the way the path is an open shelf; a part of the way it burrows in this picturesque fashion through the very breast of the cliffs. We are facing just now nearly south. Italy lies over beyond those misty mountains.

This is an outlook to delight an artist. We all know how midsummer mists often veil distances at home. Here is the same effect, made highly beautiful by local contrasts of light and dark, shade and sunlight. Notice the deepest dark in the tunnel ahead and that gleam of intensely bright sunshine on the dusty road before it. The shadow side of that stone wall is much darker than the road; the shadow side of that pillar of rock (left on purpose by the engineers) is darker still; then notice how the distant mountains grow paler and paler and paler till they melt into hazy mystery in the distance. These exquisite variations of dark and light are to the eye what musical notes are to the ear, running up and down the scale between the darkest dark and the brightest light. Landscape artists spend years trying to make the rest of us see these things.

There are many other beautiful outlooks to be had around this same lake. One is a westward view from the Axenstrasse (Stereograph 1748); another is at Lucerne (1741). There is a magnificent view of the Uri Rothstock from Seelisberg (1749).

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Tunnels of the Axenstrasse overhanging Lake Lucerne, Switzerland.

Tunnels de l'Axenstrasse qui dominent sur le lac des Quatre-Cantons, Suisse.

Die Tunnels der Axenstraße, Vierwaldstättersee, Schweiz.

Túneles de la Axenstrasse, dando al lago de los Cuatro Cantones, Suiza.

Axenstrasstunnlar öfver sjön Lucerne, Schweitz.

Туннели Аксенштрассе, нависшія надъ Люцерн-скимъ озеромъ, Швейцарія.